

Briar Roses

Make a rose for Brer Rabbit and BedStuy.

You will need:

- To be from a place outsiders consider dangerous
- A stoop or other public place to put a potted plant
- A thorny plant

Prep:

If you do not already know the story of Brer Rabbit and the Briar Patch, learn it. Next, think of something you love about your neighborhood that is unique or beautiful. Now, find or make something that reminds you of this beautiful thing. This object will be your rose. Nest it inside the thorny plant so as the plant grows bigger, it will protect your object.

Performance:

When people in your neighborhood ask about the sculpture, explain that it is a metaphor for how black neighborhoods are sometimes like the briar patch in the Brer Rabbit story. Brer Fox thought it was a deadly place, but Brer Rabbit loved the briar patch because it gave him and his family a safe place to grow. If your neighborhood is being gentrified, you can use your sculpture to start conversations about how removing too many of the neighborhood's thorns will make some of the things you love most about your neighborhood vulnerable.